

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: September 17, 1998

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: ECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplement Analysis for the Watershed Management Program EIS, Project No. 98-019-03

to: Thomas C. McKinney – NEPA Compliance Officer

Proposed Action: Wind River Restore – Sediment and Hydrologic Regime

Budget No.: f5020

Watershed Management Techniques or Actions Addressed Under This Supplement Analysis (See App. A of the Watershed Management Program EIS): USDA Forest Service roads will be decommissioned to restore sediment and hydrologic regime. Activities will also serve to prevent future road prism mass movement and slope failure. Techniques will follow those described in *Road Closure and Obliteration in the Forest Service* (June 1996).

Location: Carson, Washington.

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and USDA Forest Service

Description of the Proposed Action: Roads in this area were originally constructed to provide access for timber harvest and management activities. Portions of the roads considered in this project were constructed in areas that were subsequently included in riparian reserves. During the Access and Travel Management (ATM) process conducted in 1994, these roads were identified as contributing to resource damage. The ATM recommendation for these roads is to take active measures to mitigate damage to include closure, scarification and planting.

During the Wind River Watershed analysis, areas with undesirable high road density and areas where roads are a resource concern were identified. Road decommissioning was proposed as a watershed restoration project. Decommissioning is intended to reduce the impacts on hydrology and peak flows, reduce sediment production from road surfaces, cuts and fills and at road/stream crossings, reduce the potential for culvert and fill failures, reduce open road density to the benefit of wildlife and reduce the number of road miles requiring expenditure of funds for re-occurring maintenance. An interdisciplinary team has reviewed the roads recommended for decommissioning in this proposal and developed the proposed action. The interdisciplinary process identified several roads that need treatment to eliminate resource damage but there is an anticipated need for those roads in the immediate future for other management activities. These roads are proposed for storm-proofing and will remain part of the road system.

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by the USDA Forest Service and meets the standards and guidelines for the Watershed Management Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision (ROD).

Section 7 consultation was conducted with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the requirements of the Endangered Species Act (Act). Of concern are the potential impacts from proposed project construction activities to Columbia River chum salmon, Lower Columbia River coho salmon, and Lower Columbia River Chinook salmon, Lower Columbia River steelhead trout, and bull trout. However, it was determined by Joe Hiss, of the USFWS, that bull trout is not present in the project area based on Level I team review. A biological assessment was completed and sent to NMFS. NMFS concurred on July 10, 1998, with BPA's finding that the action is "not likely to adversely affect" listed Columbia River chum salmon, Lower Columbia River coho salmon, and Lower Columbia River Chinook salmon, Lower Columbia River steelhead trout.

Field surveys were conducted by a USFS archaeologist (June 1998) in the project areas and there were no cultural resources present. The Yakama Indian Nation was also contacted on December 7, 1997, notifying them of the proposed project. The USDA has a Washington programmatic agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office on cultural resources, which also applies to these projects.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 7.8H.2, 7.10, and 10.2 of the Northwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The attached Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Watershed Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-0265) and ROD, and; 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

Eric N. Powers
Environmental Project Lead
Environment, Fish and Wildlife Group

Concur:

Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

DATE: _____

Attachments:

NEPA Compliance Checklist
NMFS Concurrence Letter
Gifford Pinchot NF Monitoring Checklist

cc:

B. Beraud - EC-4

L. Croff - ECP-4

N. Weintraub - ECN-4

J. Baugher – EWN-4

M. Shaw - EWP-4

P. Key - LN-7

K. Wieman – USDA Forest Service

Official File - ECN (EQ-14)

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